

minus lens \$15.<sup>37</sup> It was in New York, however, that he determined to pursue the profession in earnest. Encouragement came from Elder Stenhouse who had reportedly brought a stereoscopic camera from England which both men experimented with in New York. Savage learned what he could about photography, investigating the improved collodion wet-plate process.

Mathew Brady was then converting his daguerreotype operation over to the wet plate. In 1856, Alexander Gardner, an English photographer, had joined Brady in New York, and with him had come the process of enlarging prints for Brady's gallery.<sup>38</sup> At this time, Savage was also participating in a Mormon choir and cultivating an interest in music and singing that stayed with him the remainder of his life.

Leaving his family in New York, Savage headed West in 1859 on a special assignment to Florence, Nebraska Territory, for the Mormon Church. There he made his first commercial start in the photographic business, setting up his camera in front of an old grey blanket and taking portraits. His darkroom consisted of a converted tea chest.<sup>39</sup> A year later, living with his family once again, he set up shop in Council Bluffs, Iowa. In his diary, dated April 30, 1860, he reported total income "from taking pictures" in the first five months of the year at \$224.75, plus \$50.00 for "giving instructions in the art."<sup>40</sup> Apparently he was trying to earn

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, December 5, 1855.

<sup>38</sup> Meredith, *Mr. Lincoln's Camera Man*, 54.

<sup>39</sup> Savage Biography.

<sup>40</sup> Savage Diaries, 1860.

*C. R. Savage captured many historic moments including this 1867 Mormon wagon train heading toward Salt Lake City. From a print in the LDS Church Historian's Office.*



enough money to buy a team of oxen and a wagon to continue west to Utah. He must have been successful, because on June 7, 1860, Savage loaded his family—a wife and two small sons—into a new wagon, prodded the oxen, and slowly moved toward the western horizon. The Savages traveled in the Franklin Brown Company of ten wagons.

Savage took pictures of the trek across the plains, but none of them, so far as is known, survives—at least none can be identified. In his diary, he reported that he “got a view of Bluff Ruins and Chimney Rock” and “a splendid view of Devils Gate,”<sup>11</sup> but it is impossible to find them in Savage’s surviving prints—mostly undated—of the Mormon Trail.

The Brown Company arrived in Salt Lake City August 27, 1860, with the Savage wagon making its way down Parley’s Canyon the following day and reaching the city long after dark. Two days later, the photographer made arrangements with Marsena Cannon “to go in with him until his departure for the states.” Apparently at that time Cannon was planning to leave Salt Lake City.<sup>12</sup> On January 30, 1861, Savage and Cannon placed a solitary ad in the *Deseret News*, announcing to the public that they would “re-open for business” in their new gallery, the first house north of the Salt Lake House, over Chislett and Clark’s new store. They advertised “photographs, stereoscopes, ambrotypes and Melainotypes [tintypes], also, pictures on cloth, leather and paper to send by mail . . . prices as low as can be afforded for good work.” The partnership could not have lasted long, however, as Cannon left for St. George at the end of 1861, at which time Savage founded his Pioneer Art Gallery on East Temple Street. In the years that followed, he be-

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, July 13 and August 5, 1860.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, August 30, 1860.

